

Fall 2005



INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

TRAIL NEWS



SPEAK



BUILD



RESPECT



RIDE



The Freeride Issue

Tips on:

- building dirt jumps
- 90 freeriding locations
- success stories

Plus: Backyard Reports

Rocky Mountain Bicycles'
Wade Simmons

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New Riders of the Purple Sage

By Mike Van Able, IMBA Executive Director

Welcome to IMBA's third-annual Freeride Guide. *Trail News* first focused on freeriding in the Summer 2002, offering a five-page report that contained the prescient, if somewhat vague, observation that "whatever [freeride] is, it's getting bigger."

We devoted an entire issue to the topic last summer, including dozens of useful tips for building challenging trail features, a list of freeriding areas across the globe — the list has been updated for this year's guide — and a 15-step guide focused on risk management related to freeriding. (Back issues of *Trail News* are available online, free of charge, at imba.com.)

In this year's edition of the Freeride Guide you'll find new advice on trail design, advocacy, freeriding success stories and a host of other topics. New riders are joining the sport every day — it's vital that IMBA reaches out with advice tailored to the style of riding that gets them pumped.

If you've read the previous Freeride Guides, you may have noticed that our tone tends to be somewhat cautious. That seems entirely appropriate when discussing a riding style that sends riders across elevated boardwalks and over crazy drop-offs! While injuries incurred while attempting stunts and jumps are a real concern, we need to recognize that mountain biking has always been risky. It's ultimately up to individual riders to decide what level of risk is right for them.

Other concerns specific to freeriding are more communal in nature: unauthorized trailbuilding, user conflicts and lawsuit liability are real issues that need to be addressed if freeriding is going to flourish. IMBA is working proactively in these areas, striving to share viable solutions with riders and land managers alike.

The bike industry is putting its design and marketing muscle behind freeriding. Companies like Rocky Mountain Bicycles (who helps make IMBA's Freeride Guides possible) are great examples of private industry giving back to the public good. I applaud corporate leaders who sell freeride-oriented gear and take active roles in creating opportunities for sustainable freeriding.

Mountain biking offers tremendous challenges — no matter how you like to ride. From exploring new trails to repairing well-loved ones, and from racing down hills to climbing steadily back up them, you get back from this sport what you put into it.

Thanks for reading,



Check imba.com/resources for a revised freeriding section, including more than 20 articles, photos, and useful links.





INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

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IMBA creates, enhances and preserves trail opportunities for mountain bikers worldwide

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Freeriding into the Future

In 1997, a story titled “Bike Makers Try Comfort and Gizmos to Pump Up Profit” appeared in the financial pages of the *New York Times*. The story speculated that disk brakes and full suspension — recent developments in bicycle technology at the time — might help boost sales by appealing to older, well-to-do riders.

The *Times* got the story half right. Nearly a decade later, the aforementioned “gizmos” have proven popular with young and old riders alike. Better brakes and plush suspension helped inspire the challenge-oriented style known as freeriding.

“Freeride reflects a generation of mountain bikers who have rediscovered the passion that first lured cyclists into the forest in the late 1970s,” says *Mountain Bike Action’s* Richard Cunningham. “The dilemma we face, however, is that the modern mountain bike is far more capable than previous bikes, so the present trail systems offer fewer challenges.”

The number of technically advanced bikes — and riders with the skills to handle them — will only increase in upcoming years. “If you look back at Trek’s catalogue from the year 2000 you’ll see a couple of cross-country bikes with fairly minimal suspension,” says Joe Vadeboncouer, a product specialist at Trek Bicycles. “Next year, we’ll offer five full categories — totaling 21 models — of full-suspension bikes. We’re confident that our future consumer is going to have an interest in freeride — it’s where the soul of the sport is these days.”

Skip Hess, president of Giant USA, agrees that the freeride category offers significant growth potential, but says there are degrees of freeride compatibility. “Freeride and downhill bikes with eight inches of travel grab the media’s attention. While they don’t provide the bulk of our full-suspension sales, those technologies do trickle down to our mid-range and entry-level models. That allows more people to tackle more kinds of terrain when they go riding.”

Here at IMBA, it’s increasingly apparent that mountain bikers across North America are eager for freeriding challenges. An unprecedented number of freeride-oriented clubs have been formed. We also received more than 20 well-crafted applications for the 2005 Kona/IMBA Freeride Grants program, and new freeride areas (on both private and public lands) are cropping up everywhere.

Developments in bicycle technology often lead to unexpected access issues, and the need to educate and encourage land managers about what the future might hold. In the past three decades, IMBA has learned a lot about how to create sustainable, challenging cycling experiences. Freeriding is simply the latest opportunity to utilize that knowledge.

Read on, because the following pages offer freeride-specific articles about trail design, access and other key issues. And visit imba.com/resources for even more information.



FREERIDE

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Earth and Sky 18 Steps to Building a Dirt Jump Park

The suggestions offered in this and other IMBA trailbuilding articles do not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation. Trailbuilders and landowners are responsible for the safety of their own trails and facilities. Freeriding and dirt jumping are high-risk activities that can result in serious injuries. IMBA's goal is to help land managers and volunteers manage these risks by sharing information.



Wade Simmons

The evolution of mountain biking goes beyond the development of ultra-technical trails — it also includes a resurgence in dirt jumping and bike parks. Here are 18 key ideas to help you design and build jump parks that are fun, durable and likely to earn approval from a land manager. Most of the advice is equally well suited to designing a freeride park, or any combination of dirt jumps and freeride challenges.

If the volume information that follows seems overwhelming, keep in mind that building a bike park is a ton of work — you'll want to have thought through the whole process well before you're knee-deep in mud. Build it right and you'll ride it forever.

1. GET PERMISSION AND BUILD A PARTNERSHIP

Always get permission and land-use permits before you begin building jumps. Most unauthorized jumps are quickly bulldozed, and their existence can jeopardize future projects. Forming a strong partnership with the land manager will create a situation in which everyone wins. The best way to get a jump park built is to take a well-planned, business-like approach. Detailed tips on how to write a proposal can be found in IMBA's book *Trail Solutions*.

2. FORM A TEAM AND SEEK INPUT

Get in touch with every rider you know and form a working group. According to Judd de Vall, a pro rider and IMBA trailbuilder who has built

several jump parks, "Involving a wide range of people gives everyone ownership and ensures the project's future. The best jump parks often result from a blend of ideas. Don't forget to include kids and BMX riders!"

3. SELECT A LOCATION

Securing a piece of property is often the most challenging element in the process. An ideal location will offer a permanent home for the jumps, be centrally located and connected to other trails, include trees that offer shade and interest, have good drainage, and include a nearby water source.

4. SECURE A PERMANENT WATER SOURCE

Convenient access to water is necessary for jump construction and maintenance. The best scenario is pressurized underground plumbing with several strategically located faucets. Don't neglect this critical element!

5. DEVELOP A RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

A thoughtfully written Risk Management Plan is the best way to ensure safety measures are developed and implemented. At a minimum, your plan should include the steps to take in an emergency, an overview of signs and perhaps fences that delineate the boundaries, a description of the inspection and maintenance plan, and info about insurance. A useful article titled "Freeriding and Risk Management: 15 Steps to Success" is available at imba.com (go to the "Resources" page and click on "Freeriding").

INTO THE FUTURE



Breckenridge, CO

6. DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE SYSTEM

It is important to develop a comprehensive signage system for your jump park. Signs should be placed at the entrance and other key locations. The main sign should describe safety guidelines, helmet rules, risk warnings, a “Use at Your Own Risk” message, responsible riding tips, emergency contact information and more.

7. ACQUIRE INSURANCE

Most public jump parks will require an insurance policy to shield landowners, officials and volunteers from liability claims that might result after a jumping injury occurs. Some land managers already have insurance policies in place for their skate parks and other recreation facilities: these can often be modified to include a jump park.

8. DEVELOP A SCHEDULED INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Jumps require routine upkeep. You must be committed to inspecting and maintaining a park before you build one. Inevitably, damage occurs from people walking on the jumps, riding when it is wet, missing landings, skidding, etc. It is important to develop a stewardship ethic among riders that encourages everyone to repair their divots, groom the jumps regularly and keep the park clean.

A written log should be kept to ensure jumps and surrounding area are being looked after regularly and maintenance work is documented. This step is key to reducing liability.

9. DESIGN THE JUMPS

Designing a park with good flow takes skill, vision and creativity. Be sure to enlist experienced jumpers. Plan a safe and predictable layout that still provides an exciting and challenging park. Features could include all types of jumps, including table-tops, gaps, step-ups, step-downs and hips. Street features like rails and wall rides are popular, as are freeride stunts like ladder bridges, skinnys, teeters and drops. Aim for linking features so riders flow immediately from one to the next. Ideally, a rider will not have to brake between jumps. Allow plenty of clear, smooth space to the sides of jumps for missed landings. Include a corridor for riders to return to the starting ramp without riding too close to the jumps.

Once you decide on all of the park's features, you'll have to create a schematic drawing that shows the entire property, including dimensions, elevations and drainage. Get the plan approved before beginning construction.

10. INCLUDE JUMPS FOR EVERYONE

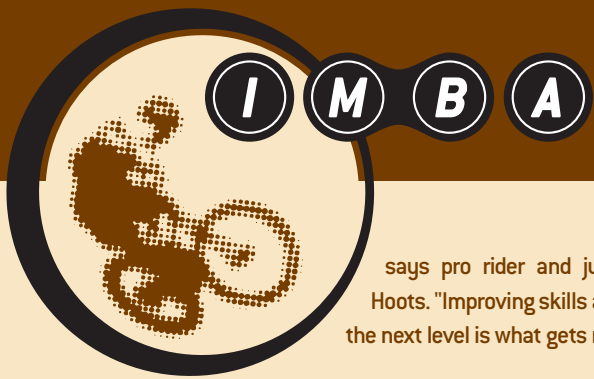
It's important to build jump lines that offer a wide variety of challenge, from easy rollers to big jumps. A diversity of lines will allow riders to build their skills gradually and will create a park that is fun for all abilities. Typically, jump lines are arranged side-by-side in increasing difficulty, all starting at a common roll-in hill and traveling in the same direction. Offer regularly scheduled skills clinics that teach riding techniques and responsible jump use. “Jumping is all about progression,”

Thomas Vanderham



“If you ride,
you must dig.”

— Judd de Vall,
pro rider and IMBA trailbuilder



FREERIDE

says pro rider and jump builder Jay Hoots. "Improving skills and moving up to the next level is what gets riders stoked."

11. TABLE-TOPS OR GAPS?

Table-tops are jumps with a flat top that allow a rider to roll over the jump without being forced to catch air. Gap jumps, also called double jumps, utilize takeoff and landing ramps with a gap or chasm in between. Riders must launch from the takeoff and clear the gap to reach the landing. Table-tops are essential for beginner and lower-intermediate lines. Because there is no gap to clear, table-tops are less risky than gaps. But expert riders often seek the

challenge of gap jumps, and table-tops require far, far more dirt than gap jumps. Semi table-tops are a blend of the two styles. They don't have a flat top, but a rider can still roll over them if desired. No matter which style you choose, build your lines consistently. If one jump in the line is a table-top, then all the jumps in that line should be table-tops. Don't surprise riders with a gap jump in the middle of an otherwise rollable line.

12. MEASUREMENTS AND GEOMETRY

Jump height should be 2-3 feet for beginner jumps — add a foot or two as difficulty increases. Jump length will be 4-7 feet from the lip to the landing for beginner jumps, and will increase with difficulty. Jump length must be paired with jump height and takeoff angle so riders will hit the landing. Jump width should be 5 feet or greater — landing ramps should be even wider to allow for flubbed landings.

The distance between the landing of one jump and takeoff of the next should be about 22-26 feet. The angle of takeoff and landing ramps on beginner jumps doesn't need to be curved or "transitioned." More difficult lines can have transitioned ramps that curve upwards and launch the rider smoothly into the air. Only the largest jumps require transitioned landings. "Takeoff transitions are an art and play an important part in the feel of a park. Take your time and work gradually to craft smooth, predictable lips," says Hoots.

13. DEVELOP A CONSTRUCTION PLAN

Reach agreement on how the jumps will be built, how long the construction phase will take, how much it will cost, and who will provide the money, dirt, equipment and labor. Taking your time in the planning stages will help prevent crises once building gets underway.

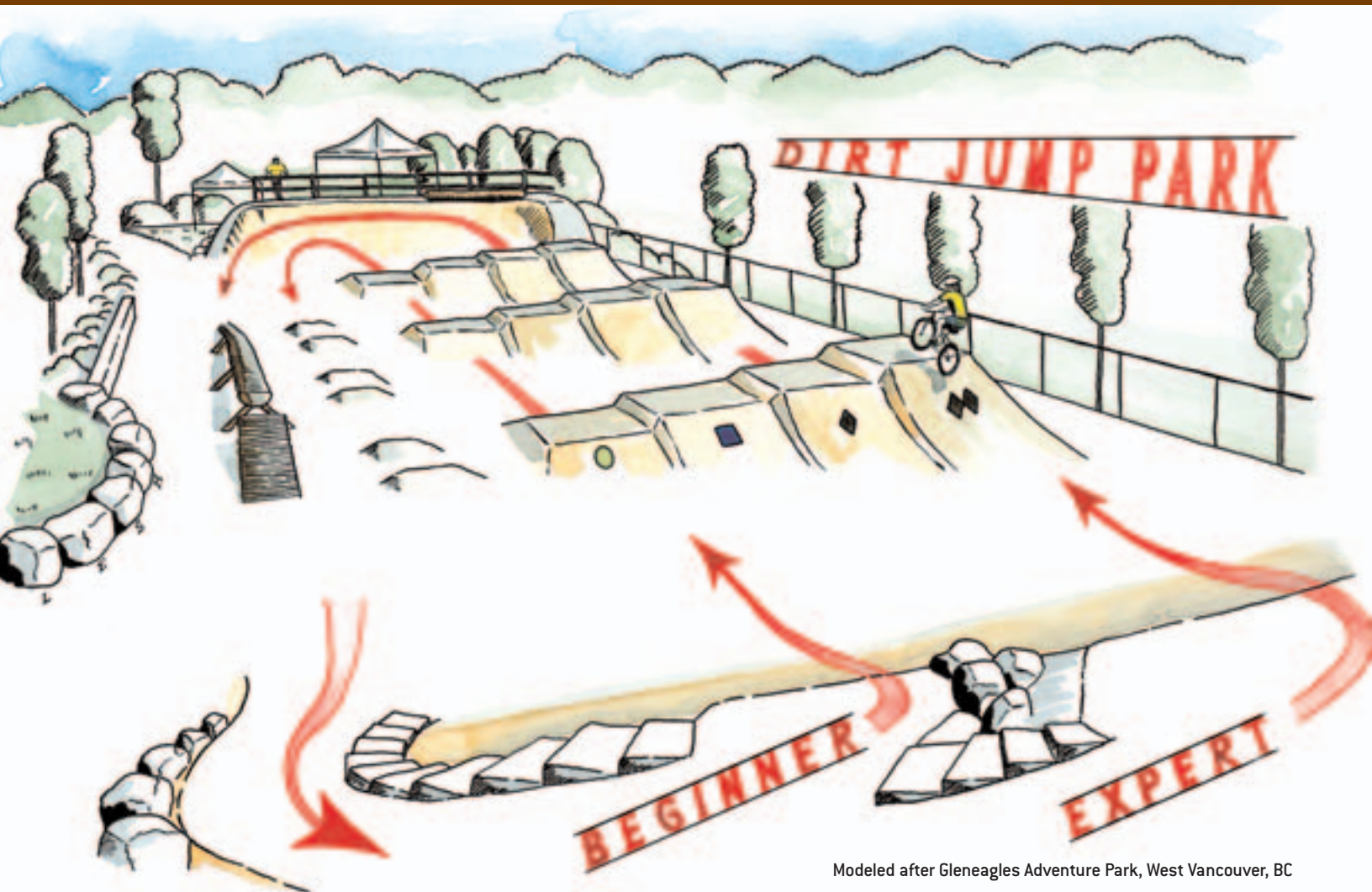
14. GET GOOD DIRT

The best soil for the surface of dirt jumps is screened loam with a fairly high clay content. Loam is ideal because it packs firmly and is easy to shape. You should be able form a ball by squeezing a handful of moist dirt. Clods that are difficult to break indicate too much clay content.

Depending on the amount of rainfall in your area, the foundation for the jumps may need to be built from a more porous dirt that allows water to drain through, such as gravel or sandy loam. High-quality dirt can be reserved for takeoffs and landings. If using dirt from the site or lower quality dirt, you can save lots of work by using a screen or mechanical sifter to remove rocks. Kris Gray, one of the riders behind a new jump park in Park City, says, "We had plenty of donated dirt from local construction projects, but we burned out our volunteers by asking them to pick rocks by hand. Renting a screen and bucket loader to remove rocks is a wise investment that will ensure volunteers have energy for the finish work."



INTO THE FUTURE



Modeled after Gleneagles Adventure Park, West Vancouver, BC

15. GRADE THE SITE FOR DRAINAGE

Visit the location during a heavy rain to learn where water flows and pools. "Drainage is everything!" says Hoots. "If possible, the site should have a gentle slope perpendicular to the jump lines to ensure water will drain away." Depressions that trap water must be filled, especially low spots between jumps. A well-drained jump park will be ready to ride sooner after rain or snow, and require less maintenance. Never ride on muddy jumps, and post signs asking others not to ride until the soil is dry.

16. BUILD AND COMPACT THE JUMPS (FINALLY!)

Using mechanized equipment to haul dirt and build jumps is a huge time-saver. Whether building by machine or hand, however, the steps are the same:

1. Form rough jumps to within a couple feet of desired size, then sculpt to within six-inches of the final shape.
2. Use a rake to remove all surface rocks and break clumps.
3. Lightly water jump surface — just enough to moisten dirt but not so much that water runs off or creates mud. Use a rake to blend moisture evenly throughout the top few inches of dirt. A thick layer of moist dirt will create a well-compacted jump surface.

4. Rake to within a couple inches of desired shape, and begin compacting the dirt.

5. When the jump is no longer sticky, use hand tools and bicycles to pack the riding surface. Lips and landings must be smooth and consistent, so take your time to pack each surface thoroughly.

17. ENCOURAGE STEWARDSHIP

Involving riders from the beginning will translate to essential ongoing maintenance. Says de Vall, "If you ride, you must dig. Because dirt jumps take so much time to build and are so fragile, riders must embrace and pass on this key jumping code."

18. LEARN FROM BMX AND SKATEBOARDING

In addition to these tips, consider the advice offered by BMX and skateboarding organizations. They've been building killer skate parks and BMX tracks since the '70s. The American Bicycle Association offers great advice in their 30-page "BMX Track Operator Kit," available at ababmx.com. Also, "Skaters for Public Skateparks" has great resources at skatersforpublicskateparks.org.



WHERE TO

Authorized freeride areas and technical trails are being developed at a rapid rate. The riding areas listed here offer many different challenges, including naturally technical trails, trails with enhanced technical features, stunt parks, jumps and downhill runs. If there is a place that we missed, tell us about it at info@imba.com. Visit imba.com/resources/freeriding for more locations, and to find the websites associated with these freeride areas.

UNITED STATES

Northstar Mountain Bike Park, Truckee, California
Mammoth Mountain Bike Park, Mammoth, California
Grouse Ridge Trail, Nevada City, California

Breckenridge Freeride Park, Breckenridge, Colorado
Keystone Resort, Summit County, Colorado
Moore Fun Trail, Fruita, Colorado
Silverton Mountain, Silverton, Colorado
Winter Park Resort, Winter Park, Colorado
Red Rock Canyon, Colorado Springs, Colorado *

Alafia River State Park, Tampa, Florida
Santos Trail System, Ocala, Florida
Trail of Experience, Lakeland, Florida
Quiet Waters Park, Deerfield Beach, Florida

Central Park Freeride Area, Forsyth County, Georgia *

Willow Lane Dirt Jump Park, Boise, Idaho
Tamarack Resort, Donnelly, Idaho
Silver Mountain Resort, Kellogg, Idaho

USACE Farmdale Reservoir Rec Area, East Peoria, Illinois
Challenge Park, Joliet, Illinois

Nordic Heritage Center, Presque Isle, Maine*
Back Country Excursions, Parsonfield, Maine

Vietnam, Milford, Massachusetts
Lynn Woods Reservation, Lynn, Massachusetts

Lakeshore Park, Novi, Michigan
Burchfield County Park, Holt, Michigan
Boyer Highlands, Harbor Springs, Michigan *
Stony Creek Skills Area, Rochester, Michigan *

Big Sky Resort, Bozeman, Montana

Bootleg Canyon, Boulder City, Nevada

Attitash Ski Resort, Glen, New Hampshire

Highland Mountain Bike Park, Northfield, New Hampshire *
Rye Airfield, Rye, New Hampshire

Diablo Freeride Park, Mountain Creek, New Jersey

Plattekill Mountain, Roxbury, New York
Sprain Ridge Park, Yonkers, New York
Whiteface Mountain Biking Center, Lake Placid, New York

Alexander Mountain Bike Park, Asheville, North Carolina*

Mohican Wilderness, Glenmont, Ohio
Beans Bike Park, Dennison, Ohio
Ray's MTB Indoor Park, Cleveland, Ohio

Post Canyon, Hood River, Oregon
Blackrock Trails, Falls City, Oregon
Silver Falls State Park, Silverton, Oregon*
Deschutes National Forest, Bend, Oregon *

Rough Riders Canyon Freeride Park, El Paso, Texas
Twin Parks Country Club, Springs (Austin), Texas

Deer Valley, Park City, Utah
Holiday Ranch Dirt Jumps, Park City, Utah

Killington Resort, Killington, Vermont
Bolton Valley Resort, Bolton Valley, Vermont
Kingdom Trails, East Burke, Vermont*

Wintergreen Resort, Crozet, Virginia

Teton National Forest, Jackson, Wyoming

Bellingham Dirt Jumps, Bellingham, Washington
Galbraith Mountain, Bellingham, Washington
I-5 Open Space/Colonnade Park, Seattle, Washington *

Snowshoe Mountain Bike Park, Snowshoe, West Virginia

CANADA

South Surrey Bike Park, Surrey, British Columbia



Panorama Mountain Bike Park, Panorama, British Columbia
Sun Peaks Resort, Sun Peaks, British Columbia
Silver Star Mountain Resort, Kelowna, British Columbia
Gleneagles Adventure Park, West Vancouver, British Columbia
Cypress Bike Park, West Vancouver, British Columbia
Cypress Mountain, West Vancouver, British Columbia
Mt. Fromme, North Vancouver, British Columbia
Mt. Seymour, North Vancouver, British Columbia
Whistler Mountain Bike Park, Whistler, British Columbia
Whistler Area Trails, Whistler, British Columbia
Mount Work Hartland Park, Victoria, British Columbia
North Saanich Dirt Jump Park, Victoria, British Columbia*
Mount Washington Alpine Resort, Courtenay, British Columbia
Kamloops Bike Ranch, Kamloops, British Columbia
Missisaugua Challenge Park, Missisaugua, Ontario
Camp Fortune, Gatineau Park, Ottawa, Ontario
Bruce Peninsula Mountain Bike Adventure Park, Wiarton, Ontario
Blue Mountain, Collingwood, Ontario
Mont-Sainte-Anne Resort, Quebec
Bromont Bike Park, Bromont, Quebec

Vallee Pruneau, Montreal, Quebec

INTERNATIONAL

Mt Buller Alpine Resort, Victoria, Australia

BikeWorld Leogang, Salzburgerland, Austria

Pace Freeride Bike Park, Dalby Forest, England *

Glentress Forest, Glentress, Scotland

Red Bull Project Downhill, Innerleithen, Scotland

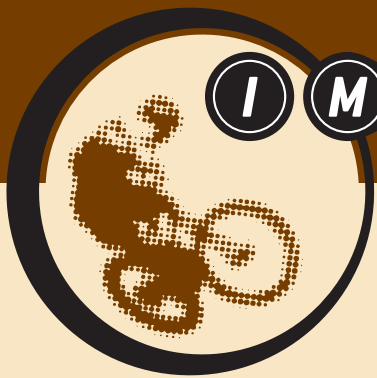
Flydown Park, Finale Ligure, Italy

Les Gets Mountain Bike Park, Les Gets, France

Fun Park Todtnau, Freiburg, Germany

Winterberg Bike Park, Winterberg, Germany

* Under development at press time



I M B A

FREERIDE

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Going Big in the Gorge

In addition to top-notch windsurfing, kiteboarding and kayaking, Oregon's Hood River County offers phenomenal riding. But when the freeride stunts in the area known as Post Canyon caught the attention of the county's Forestry Department a few years ago, cyclists had to improve their relations with the land managers in order to keep their favorite trails and stunts intact.

The Forestry Department announced it would form a trails committee to help develop policy for various recreational activities. Mountain bikers made sure they were at the table, and the committee members worked hard to represent the entire mountain biking community — including freeriders — at the monthly meetings.

"The freeriding scene in Hood River is highly developed, with the Gorge Freeriders Association (GFRA) leading the charge," says Jake Felt, a founding GFRA member. "We showed the committee we could work productively with other recreation groups, including hikers and equestrians."

As a result, Post Canyon now offers a huge array of freeriding stunts, ranging in difficulty from intermediate to downright nasty. "On the Egg Drop trail, we installed a 12-foot bridge that drops you onto a wooden platform, then shoots you over a 6-foot wooden kicker," says Felt. Other features range from a series of progressively more challenging drop-offs to a jump that launches riders across a road gap.

Construction in Post Canyon is done in accordance with the guidelines set forth in IMBA's Trail Solutions book. "The book is an awesome resource — the county definitely liked the idea that we were meeting established guidelines. That helped answer a lot of their questions about the durability and stability of the stunts," says Felt.



The freeriding facilities at Post Canyon (left) and Gleneagles (right) are built to last. More freeriding images are available at imba.com.

Vancouver Riders Soar at Gleneagles

Gleneagles Adventure Park is a new mountain bike skills park located on municipal land near Horseshoe Bay in West Vancouver, British Columbia. The park opened in 2004; a planned move and reopening took place in 2005, in conjunction with a new skateboard park.

Gleneagles features a dirt-jumping area and a variety of freeriding features. The jumps — all tabletops — are designed for a wide range of abilities and vary in height from 3 to 7 feet, and in length from 3 to 12 feet. The freeriding area includes bridges, ramps, drops, teeters and skinnys. Each feature is rated by difficulty, from green circle to black diamond.

Trevor Chronister, an 18-year-old mechanic at the Cove Bike Shop, helped design and build the park. "The best thing about Gleneagles is that the features and jumps are progressive. You can start on smaller stuff and work up as you get more skilled. There's always another level to work toward. It's exploding and we love it."

According to the district's website, the park offers more than extreme thrills. It also provides a safe place for kids and families to play together, be active and connect with their community.

"The kids didn't want another playing field — they wanted a mountain biking park," says Christi O'Krainetz, youth advocate for the District of West Vancouver. "And by combining the bike park with a skate park, all located next to the fire hall and police office, we've created an ideal community gathering spot."

"From a liability point of view, we treat it like any other public playground," says O'Krainetz. "The district's risk management team assessed it and we employed straightforward safety measures. We use signage to describe the risks, park etiquette and rules. All obstacles are rated by difficulty, and we use a checklist for maintenance."

O'Krainetz had this piece of advice for other communities looking to build a bike park: "Volunteers must shoulder some of the burden, but partnerships are the key. Find a champion inside the halls of government who can take on the new challenge and push it through the beauracracy."

Several professionals were brought in to design and construct Gleneagles. Pro mountain biker Jay Hoots led the design process, skilled carpenters from Whistler helped with the stunt construction, and landscape architects Van der Zalm and Associates provided architectural services.

Learn more at westvancouver.ca





TRAIL NEWS

IMBA Pioneer Gary Sprung Shifts to Advisory Role

After more than 14 years of service as a key member of IMBA staff, Gary Sprung has recently transitioned to an advisory role with IMBA. Sprung plans on devoting more time to Gnrups Consulting, the database consulting business he founded, and enjoying time with his wife Carolyn.

"The list of things that Gary Sprung started — including the field of mountain bike advocacy — is long and impressive," says former IMBA Executive Director Tim Blumenthal. "As a young man, Gary fell in love with the big issues of the West — land, water and recreation. He was the first to introduce mountain biking into that mix. He also found time to create a cross-country ski race — the Alley Loop, in Crested Butte — and make countless other contributions to the communities he's been involved with," says Blumenthal.

Sprung worked as environment editor of *Mountain Bike* from 1985 until 1995. He joined IMBA in 1991, first serving as editor of its newsletter, and taking on additional duties over the years.

"Eventually, it came time for me to focus on policy and advocacy work," says Sprung. "Tim came up with a great job title, 'Senior National Policy Advisor,' which pretty well described the work I've concentrated on in recent years."

Sprung lived in Crested Butte, Colorado, for 21 years. He started riding a one-speed klunker, then graduated to a Stumpjumper the first year Specialized produced them. Sprung has long been committed to the idea that environmentalism and recreation go hand-in-hand. He served as president of one of Colorado's most successful environmental advocacy groups, the High Country Citizens Alliance.

This summer, Sprung was inducted to the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame for his work in cycling advocacy. The Hall is located in his former hometown of Crested Butte.

Although he's no longer an IMBA staffer, bike advocacy is still a priority in Sprung's life. "The fact that many 'enviros' oppose mountain biking is a real problem. They're making a huge mistake — they really can't afford to alienate 40 million mountain bikers. That's been the prime motivation for my IMBA work in recent years," says Sprung.

"Gary is a tremendous resource for IMBA," says Executive Director Mike Van Abel. "Fortunately, he's still available to us for consulting. His mark on IMBA is indelible — Gary's vision for mountain bike advocacy has truly shaped the sport."

Congress Backs Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day

For the second year in a row, the U.S. Congress has endorsed IMBA's Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day initiative. A joint resolution sponsored by Senator Richard Burr (NC) and Congresswoman Virginia Fox (NC) has been earmarked for swift passage this fall.

National Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day helps adults and cycling clubs introduce kids to the sport of mountain biking. The events celebrate the life of Jack Doub, an avid teenage mountain biker from North Carolina who passed away in 2002. Funding has been provided by the Jack Doub Memorial Endowment and the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation.

Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day falls on Oct. 1 of this year's calendar. Visit imba.com for information on hosting an event — register early and you'll be eligible to win free bikes.

New Transportation Bill Promises More Trails

This summer, the U.S. Congress approved a new five-year federal transportation bill that will increase trail funding, including federal grants for singletrack.

The new bill promises more money for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), a small but important part of the massive \$286 billion transportation bill. The RTP program is funded by non-highway recreation gas taxes, and has helped communities build and repair thousands of miles of trails, involving more than 7,000 projects in all 50 states.

Government Affairs Director Jenn Dice says, "IMBA did extensive lobbying for the program on Capital Hill and in key districts. We also executed a successful letter-writing campaign that generated more than 1,500 letters."

"This new bill is great for mountain biking," said IMBA Executive Director Mike Van Abel. "We're pumped that funding for the Recreational Trails Program will increase. This federal grant program is extremely important to mountain biking's future."

BACKYARD



Mountain Bike Camp

Northeast

NEMBA announces the formation of a new chapter, Central New Hampshire NEMBA, to cover Hillsborough and the Sunapee Lakes region. Central NH NEMBA has already teamed with the US Army Corps of Engineer's to build new single-track at Elm Brook Park, in Hopkinton, and conducted an IMBA Trailbuilding School with the Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew.

The Kingdom Trails Association has completed a freeride trail descending Burke Mountain, and has secured permission to use the East Bowl Ski Trail as a downhill option. The association was awarded a RTP grant and Kona/IMBA Freeride grant to install signage and erosion control measures. They are also conducting a feasibility study to create a bike path between East Burke and Lyndonville, along the Passumpsic River.

Vermont's Stowe Mountain Bike Club and the Mad River Riders, both chapters of the Vermont Mountain Bike Advocates, have worked out a management agreement with the state for Putnam State Forest and Camel's Hump State Forest, which should lead to new riding opportunities.

The Kiski Valley Fat Tire Fanatics, the Pittsburgh Offroad Cyclists and the Laurel Highlands Off and On Road Bicycle Association are helping the Roaring Run Watershed Association to rebuild singletrack trails that were devastated by logging operations in 2004. The groups have already built four miles of new singletrack in central Pennsylvania.

—Philip Keyes, Dirt Rag/NEMBA

Southeast

On July 5, SORBA-CSRA and Long Cane Trails, (LCT) began construction of the Forks Area Trail System, in the South Piedmont region. A \$100,000 Recreational Trail Program grant was awarded to LCT by the South Carolina Parks Recreation and Tourism office. The project is a partnership of the USFS, SORBA-CSRA, the South Carolina Parks Department, and LCT. The USFS will spend \$15,000 on the project, and SORBA-CSRA have promised 1,500 volunteer hours. Seventeen miles of trail will be built in Phase 1, with another 15 miles to come in Phase 2.

Trails in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, are open again after the county imposed a closure due to environmental and crowding concerns. New trail signs are in place, and trailhead parking has been enlarged. Most of the trails have been reopened, and some have been rerouted to avoid erosion.

Two new bridges have been built at Little Big Econ Park, in East Orange County, Florida. Cyclists are reminded that the park's \$2 day fee helps support the trail system.

Highlands Trail Foundation, in Elkins, West Virginia, has released the Allegheny Highlands Trail map, featuring singletrack in the Monongahela National Forest. Maps are available at Randolph and Tucker County Visitors Centers, local bike shops and trailheads. Visit highlandstrail.org for more information.

—Scott Scudamore, MORE

Midwest

The first-ever Minnesota Mountain Bike Summit was held September 9. Activities included riding the area's sweetest singletrack, homegrown entries in the MORC Film Festival and generally having the mother of all good times. Beyond the festivities, important talks concerning new trails and enhanced opportunities for challenging riding were on the docket.

In North Dakota, two new reps will join veteran trail advocate Ron Luethe: Tyler McKay (trail_head26@yahoo.com) and Mark Liebig (liebigs@bis.midco.net). Ron will focus on Bismarck, Mark will work in the western half of the state and Tyler will take the east.

Mark Liebig, Ron Luethe and local mountain bike racer Amy Shreve conducted a Mountain Bike Camp for Girl Scouts this summer. Shreve offered riding tips, employing cones, ropes, and boards to help develop the Scouts' skills. "It was awesome to see so many girls develop an interest in cycling," said Shreve.

In August, the Hoosier Mountain Bike Association (HMBA) conducted a successful trailbuilding session at Brown County State Park. Sixteen volunteers braved hot conditions and completed a new section of trail.

Stony Creek Metropark, located near Detroit, will soon feature a challenging new trail system and skills area, thanks to a recently awarded NORBA/IMBA Trail Tune-Up Grant and the Michigan Mountain Biking Association.

—Drew Vankant, IMBA Staff



Road Apple Rally



Jim Hasenauer

Rockies

IMBA urges mountain bikers to submit comments on southwestern Montana's Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest draft management plan. The plan recommends Wilderness designations that would ban mountain bikes and block access to the Continental Divide Trail. Comments should be postmarked or received via e-mail by September 28. Visit imba.com (click on the Action Alerts cell) to learn more.

Thanks to a NORBA/IMBA Trail Tune-Up Grant, Velo de Animas Bicycle Club (San Juan County, NM) will re-route a portion of the Road Apple Rally Trail from dirt road to singletrack. The race, scheduled for Oct. 1, is one of the longest ongoing mountain bike events in the country and will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2005.

In Jackson, WY, the Jackson Hole Community Pathways and Friends of Pathways announced the results of the Community Pathways User Survey. Visit grandtetonpathways.org to learn about developments in the upcoming Grand Teton National Park Draft Transportation Plan, which could enhance bicycling opportunities in the community and the park.

Volunteers in the Tuscon area are joining forces to build a 25-mile section of the nearly-complete Arizona Trail. Visit aztrail-build.org for information, or to attend one of more than a dozen trailwork days scheduled this fall and winter.

—Mark Eller, IMBA Staff

Pacific

In July, IMBA's Jim Hasenauer testified in front a congressional committee on the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act, a bill that threatens to ban mountain biking from 170 miles of singletrack trails. The former IMBA president said that IMBA remains dedicated to land conservation and believes that the Wilderness designation is just one of many tools that should be employed to protect wild places. When proposed Wilderness areas include significant mountain biking opportunities, IMBA suggests diverse land designations that protect natural areas while preserving access for bicycles.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has announced that 20 miles of trail will open to bikes on the Warm Springs arm of Lake Sonoma, a reservoir tucked away in the hills West of Healdsburg, California. BTC Marin and Sonoma County Trails Council installed signs to designated the multi-use trail, at the request of the Corps. A trailwork day has been scheduled for Sept. 25. Check btcmarin.org for updates.

SoCal riders are encouraged to attend CORBA's Fat Tire Festival on October 16 in Malibu Creek State Park. Just \$20 buys a poker ride, opportunities to demo bikes, a huge raffle, and Carmen's Tacos for lunch.

Hook up with the Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew on Nov. 10-13 in Big Bear, and Nov. 17-20 in San Diego.

—Mark Eller, IMBA Staff

The World

Mountain bike tourism in Scotland is on the rise, according to the *Sunday Times*. The Scottish Tourism Department estimates that the number of mountain biking trips exceeded 1 million in 2004. The Scottish Forestry Commission has established a 7 Stanes (7 Stones) circuit of mountain biking trails, an innovative and successful program to promote bike tourism. Visit 7stanes.gov.uk for details.

IMBA Trail Specialist Joey Klein will spend a month working in Australia this fall. Klein will attend the Australian Bike Show, then travel the continent to meet with clubs, bike advocates and trailbuilders. Klein is working with Mountain Bike Australia to promote the tour: mtba.asn.au

—Pete Webber, IMBA Staff



BUILD

**Donate to IMBA's
Trailbuilding Fund**

"The greatest innovation in
mountain biking is the trail."
— Gary Fisher

Please visit imba.com to make a donation.



THE BIZ

IMBA staffer Tammy Pickerell launches over a gap at Bootleg Canyon, Nevada. (No, she didn't case it.)

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Corporate Update

Members of the cycling industry will again converge upon the fabulous Orleans Casino bowling center on Thursday evening, Sept. 29 to knock 'em back while knocking 'em down at the 8th annual **Kona Buck A Bowl Fun Raiser**.

The Interbike fundraiser will once again benefit the **Kona/IMBA Freeriding Grant Program**. The event starts at 8:30pm with the traditional "First Strike for IMBA." Kona's co-founders, Dan and Jake have pledged \$100 for every strike thrown on the first ball of the evening. Cost for a team of four is \$200, and \$800 for a block of four lanes. To register a team, contact Mark Peterson, Kona's King Pin, at mp@konaworld.com.

Many thanks go to Above-and-Beyond corporate supporter, **Gary Fisher** (both the company and the man) for sponsoring IMBA's upcoming **Trailbuilding Fund Campaign**. Gary Fisher lent his name, an inspirational quote and a short letter to the effort while the company paid for the premium T-shirts that are being sent to contributors.

Three Smokin' Deals That Help Raise Money for IMBA:

1. Sport a Pair of New IMBA Cycling Shorts

IMBA members can get a sweet deal on new cycling shorts while raising money for our programs. Above and Beyond supporter, Voler Team Apparel sells IMBA cycling shorts on their website, velowear.com. Voler contributes \$5 to IMBA for each pair of shorts sold. Since its creation, the promotion has raised more than \$6,000 for IMBA.

2. Lower Your Phone Bill

Telphonic Communications offers IMBA corporate and individual members an opportunity to save on their long-distance bills while raising money for IMBA. Telphonic provides inexpensive, long-distance domestic and international phone service at a domestic flat rate of four cents per minute, 24/7, with no monthly fees. They also offer several attractive mobile phone packages. Telphonic is committed to providing helpful customer service, while making a donation that equals five percent of each customer's monthly charges to IMBA. More info at telphonic.com.

3. Purchase a Pearl Izumi Outreach Product

Pearl Izumi's website now features a new line of limited edition products that benefit non-profit organizations. Simply visit the Outreach section of pearlizumi.com, purchase an item or two, and designate IMBA as your beneficiary. IMBA will receive a 20-percent donation from your total sale.

Welcome to IMBA's newest corporate members: **Epic Rides, Kinetic Koffee Company, Park Tool and Wingnut**.

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TAKE A KID MOUNTAIN BIKING ON OCT. 1!

IMBA will celebrate the second-annual Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day on Saturday, Oct. 1, 2005. You can help by leading a kids ride in your local area. Register your ride on the IMBA website for a chance to win free bikes!



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